

Kentucky Teacher

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coming this fall
Page 6



May 2006

News for the Nation's Most Innovative Educators

www.education.ky.gov

2006 education legislation will become law in July

Kentucky lawmakers passed a number of education-related bills during their 60-day session earlier this year. Gov. Ernie Fletcher has signed these bills into law, and they become effective July 12. Each summarized bill is listed by number as a House Bill (HB), House Committee Resolution (HCR), Senate Bill (SB) or Senate Joint Resolution (SJR). For the full text of any law, go to www.lrc.ky.gov/RECORD/06RS/record.htm.

Assessment

Assessment and accountability: Requires no later than 2007-2008, that the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) include assessments in English, reading, mathematics and science using a high school readiness exam in grade 8; a college readiness exam in grade 10; the ACT exam in grade 11; and any other component necessary to comply with the federal No Child Left Behind Act. Permits students in grades 10-12 to take WorkKeys assessments in reading for information, locating information and applied mathematics. Requires reporting of student results and recording of the results on a student's high school transcript. Requires remediation for students with low ACT scores. Requires readiness reports in reading and mathematics to fifth-grade parents based on the student's fourth-grade state assessment results, along with a plan for correcting deficiencies. Provides for technical assistance to schools and districts in the development of remediation programs. (SB 130)

End-of-course examinations: Requires the Kentucky Department of Education, with the help of content teachers and postsecondary faculty, to develop end-of-

course examinations in Algebra I, Algebra II and Geometry and pilot no later than the end of the 2007-2008 school year. Prohibits use of student scores as a criterion for a teacher's formal evaluation or pay during the pilot period. Requires a report about the pilot study and policy options. (HB 197)

Facilities

School facilities: Permits offers of assistance to local school districts for building school facilities to be escrowed up to eight years. (SB 205)

Governance

Historical displays: Permits a school council to authorize the display of historic artifacts, monuments, symbols and texts, including but not limited to religious materials, in conjunction with a course of study. (HB 277)

Nominating petitions: Changes the number of petitioners signing the nominating petition for election to a board of education to two. (HB 361)

Office of Education Accountability: Requires the Office to monitor elementary and secondary education and report to the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee by Dec. 1 of each year. Lists requirements for an annual research agenda and the Office's annual report. (HB 581)

Assistance to schools: Directs a study on how to effectively provide assistance to schools not meeting established goals for student achievement to be completed by Dec. 1. (HCR 214)

Programs

Primary program: Clarifies that a child

See **2006** on Page 9

Legislative budget raises salaries, adds instructional days, funds programs

Increased per-student funding, salary increases for Kentucky public school teachers and school employees, and additional instructional days are among the items funded by the 2006-2008 budget (House Bill 380) passed by the Kentucky General Assembly in April.

The major source of school funding for local districts is the Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK) program. Schools will be given a base of \$3,508 per student in Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 and \$3,822 per student in FY 2008. The current per-student base is \$3,445.

Certified and classified school employees will receive a 2 percent salary increase in FY 2007. Teachers and other certified employees will receive \$3,000 in additional pay in FY 2008. Classified employ-

ees will receive a 5 percent pay increase, not to exceed \$2,500. All salary increases are in addition to increases provided for changes in rank or additional experience.

The legislature also provided additional money for salary supplements to fund anticipated growth in the number of Kentucky teachers who are receiving National Board certification. Also, more funding is provided in FY 2008 for local districts to serve students with limited English proficiency.

Legislators also added two instructional days to the school calendar in the 2007-2008 school year and provided \$32.6 million to fund the additional costs, including salary, transportation and student costs. Districts that do not already offer 177 days

See **LEGISLATIVE** on Page 9



Photo by Rick McComb

A fun way to learn

The new playground at Brandeis Elementary School (Jefferson County) is an outdoor classroom designed to increase students' physical and intellectual development. At left, fifth grader Carrie Anderson plays tic-tac-toe with drums that show the planets, seasons and phases of the moon while classmate Dishan Romine looks at the word "hello" translated into the 19 different languages spoken by Brandeis families.

Board approves Program of Studies and writing portfolio regulations

By Cathy Lindsey

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The Kentucky Board of Education took time during its April meeting to pass a resolution expressing its gratitude to Kentucky teachers and praising their professionalism, dedication and concerted efforts to improve their own knowledge and teaching styles.

"We have a lot of outstanding teachers in Kentucky performing high-quality teaching," state Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit told the board during its discussion of the resolution. "They have responded to the challenges we've given them, and we're lucky to have them."

The work of Kentucky teachers also will be recognized and celebrated throughout the state during Teacher Appreciation Week, which begins May 8. National Teacher Day will be celebrated on May 9.

Also at its April meeting, the board gave final approval to two regulations. The first governs the "Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools, Grades P-12." The document outlines the minimum requirements for content standards at all grade levels in a variety of subjects.

Recent changes to the minimum high school graduation requirements and adjustments to the Core Content for Assessment necessitated this year's revision of the Program of Studies. The board also recognized the need to align the document with national projects such as the American Diploma Project and Achieve.

More than 2,000 Kentucky teachers and administrators participated in the review

of the Program of Studies and responded to an online survey regarding changes. A draft of the approved document is posted on the department's Web site at www.education.ky.gov. Go to "KDE QuickLinks" in the upper right-hand corner, click and select "Program of Studies."

The board also gave final approval to the regulation that governs writing portfolio procedures. The amended regulation, based on educator feedback during the past two years, includes language that clarifies practices that can reduce

See **BOARD** on Page 10

What's Inside

Bulletin Board.....	2
Being prepared is best defense	3
Administrators find something powerful in their handheld PCs	4
Reading First schools; health career PD	5
Fifth graders learn to be scientists	7
Students let their voices be heard	8
News for school leaders	11
Therapeutic recreation makes a difference	12

Bulletin Board

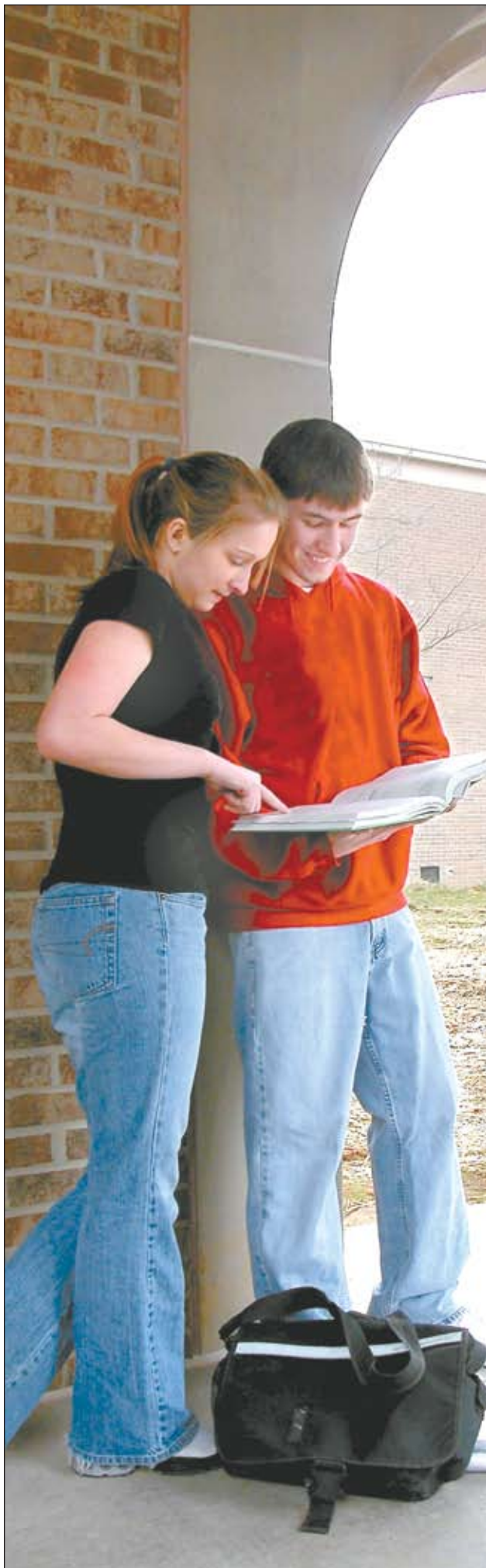


Photo by Rick McComb

Conferences

KAHPERD

The Kentucky Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (KAHPERD) has set Nov. 8-10 for its annual convention in Lexington.

www.kahperd.com

Events

Louisville Science Center

The Louisville Science Center is offering three professional development opportunities this summer:

- Inquiry Summit, June 26-30: Administrators and teacher trainers will gain an understanding of inquiry-based learning.

- Teacher Institute, July 17-21: Workshops offer teachers in grades 3-8 innovative, hands-on ways to cover science concepts.

- Early Childhood Teacher Institute, July 6-14: Teachers of children ages 2-7 will learn hands-on activities that provide innovative ways to present science concepts.

For more information, contact the Louisville Science Center's Education Programs Coordinator at (502) 561-6100, Ext. 6567, or toll free (800) 591-2203, Ext. 6567.

Summer PD

Green River Regional Educational Cooperative (GRREC) in Bowling Green offers three summer professional development opportunities.

“Bringing Rigor and Relevance to the Middle and High School Classroom: A Secondary School Symposium,” set for June 13-14, features Willard Daggett and Abigail James.

“Adolescent Literacy Institute,” June 21-22, focuses on strategies to support secondary students in reading and learning content.

“I’ve DIBELed, Now What?” is set for July 13 (K-1) and July 14 (Grades 2-3) to assist teachers and reading coaches in understanding how to use DIBELS data.

Visit the GRREC Web site at www.grrec.ky.gov for more information and registration. All programs are submitted for EILA credit.

Secondary literacy institutes

The Kentucky Department of Education will host literacy institutes throughout the state this summer for secondary educators (9-12), special needs teachers, district/school coordinators, administrators and five-member school teams. The institutes will address many barriers students have in learning secondary content and will emphasize tools and strategies to overcome those barriers. Institute participation includes fall and spring follow-up sessions.

For more information and registration, contact Sandra Hamon, (502) 564-2106, Ext. 4104, saundra.hamon@education.ky.gov or visit the department's Web site at www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Instructional+Resources/High+School.

Paraeducator academy

Paraeducators of Kentucky, in collaboration with the Kentucky Department of Education, will host the 2006 Paraeducator Academy June 19-20 in Louisville. “No Para Left Behind” will include sessions for special education and Title I paraeducators/instructional assistants.

Contact: Barb Locker, project coordinator, (859) 257-2080, blocker@uky.edu.

Kentucky State Fair

The Kentucky State Fair is set for Aug. 17-27 in Louisville. “Kaleidoscope Discovery Zone '06” is the theme for this year's educational exhibit. New topics will be

explored in science and social studies, while including the arts, technology, reading, writing and careers.

For more information, go to www.kystatefair.org, click on “Special Exhibits” in the left-hand menu and select “Educational Exhibit.”

Aviation institutes

Three, two-day teacher institutes that infuse technology and learning within the context of aviation will be offered in June. The Kentucky Department of Education, Kentucky Department of Transportation and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) are sponsors. Sessions will be held in Hazard, Frankfort and Gilbertsville.

<http://transportation.ky.gov/Aviation/education.htm>

Theatre education institute

The annual theatre education institute conducted by Jenny Wiley Theatre and Morehead State University will be July 10-14 in Prestonsburg. Teachers can learn hands-on techniques for integrating drama into the curriculum. Graduate or professional development credit is available.

www.jwtheatre.com/education.html

Forensic educator workshop

The American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) has set June 22-24 for its forensic educator workshop at the Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. The three-day workshop is designed for forensic science teachers.

For more information, go to www.aafs.org and click on “FSEC/IUPUI” in the left-hand menu.

Mathematics coach training

The Kentucky Center for Mathematics at Northern Kentucky University has scheduled summer institutes for mathematics coaches and mentors. Three, two-week workshops will feature training in mathematics content and instruction, coaching strategies and techniques, and Kentucky mathematics initiatives.

For more information about the training sessions, visit www.kentuckymathematics.org/coaching.html.

Journalism teacher award

July 1 is the deadline for nominations to the 2006 National High School Journalism Teacher Awards Program.

For more information, go to <http://DJNewspaperFund.dowjones.com> and click on “High School Teachers.”

Resources

KCSS wants to promote your ideas

Do you have an innovative way of promoting positive student behavior and safety as part of your classroom curriculum? If so, the Kentucky Center for School Safety (KCSS) is looking for creative approaches to teaching school safety and responsible student behavior as part of the core curriculum.

The best lessons and photos of activities related to mentoring programs, drunk-driving simulations, conflict resolution, classroom bullying prevention, substance abuse prevention and Internet safety programs will be showcased on the center's Web site at www.kysafeschools.org.

Contact: Matt Buckman, matt.buckman@uky.edu

Online physics

The University of Kentucky's Department of Physics and Astronomy offers four online, one-hour-of-credit physics courses for professional development or graduate credit. Courses on Light, Temperature and Heat, Electricity and Magnetism, and a new course on Force, Motion and Energy are offered to teachers (grades 4-9).

www.hovphysics.com

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Commissioner's Comments

Being prepared for flu pandemic is best defense

By Gene Wilhoit
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If you've been watching the news lately, you're aware that people in Asia are contracting and dying from a dangerous bird flu. An increasing number of people have become infected with the Avian H5N1 flu from direct contact with infected birds.

Overseas, flocks of infected domesticated birds have been destroyed. However, wild birds also can carry the disease and help spread it during migration to other birds. Already, the disease has been found in birds in Europe.

dealt annually with high absenteeism in schools due to flu, but no outbreak has reached a pandemic level.

Without sounding alarmist, I believe we all need to heed the public health experts' predictions and make plans in case a flu outbreak in the near future should reach pandemic proportions.

That's why I'm asking Kentucky public school educators to get involved in local community planning for a flu pandemic. Kentucky health officials began holding local planning summits throughout the state in March and will continue these meetings into mid-June. (Go to <http://kentucky.gov/Newsroom/chfs/pansummitupdate.htm> for a list of upcoming summits.)

What is a pandemic?

A pandemic is a global disease outbreak that is not preventable. Because the disease spreads rapidly, health care systems become overloaded, and medical supplies become limited.

A pandemic outbreak can last six to eight weeks. However, everyone in a school or community wouldn't be sick at the same time. Illness would occur in two or three waves, with duration as long as 12 to 24 weeks.

A disease of this magnitude would interrupt life as we know it. Schools and businesses would be forced to close to help halt spread of the disease. There could be travel bans and quar-

antines of ill families.

Why would it happen?

If the Avian H5N1 strain evolves into a virus that can be transmitted from person to person, there initially would be no human vaccine against the disease. Without a vaccine, the disease would spread quickly from person to person — especially in poorer nations and among the frailer segments of the world population. World health officials would declare a flu pandemic.

Our youngest students and their elderly relatives and neighbors would be most susceptible. It wouldn't take long for a sweeping illness to shut down schools and businesses, create health-care problems and cause severe illness and death.

Educators can help

Education is a critical component in community planning for a pandemic. Schools already have plans in place to close for a

few days when high flu absences occur. With a pandemic outbreak, schools could be closed four to six months.

Plans need to be in place so decisions can be made quickly about when to close schools, how long to stay closed, what to do about instruction and when to reopen. Many decisions would be made in consultation with local health departments.

I believe educators can help in three important areas of local planning:

- teaching students preventative health measures
- communicating with students and parents about the health care issues and instruction
- coordinating services between schools and local health and emergency officials

Hygiene education

Each flu season, schools throughout the state take part in disease prevention efforts. Teachers need to continue to emphasize good hygiene habits that will protect students from infectious diseases: washing hands, sneezing or coughing into a tissue or elbow, and avoiding crowds during disease outbreaks.

In case of a pandemic, sick leave policies will need to be in place to allow staff and students who become ill to leave school and not return until their symptoms resolve.

Effective communication

Many schools and districts have established methods of communicating with students, staff, parents and the community. Decisions must be made about how to use these communication networks (phone, e-mail, Web sites, local cable TV, radio and newspapers) to disseminate information about school closures and alternative methods of instruction.

We learned from the Hurricane Katrina disaster that "return to normal" for many people means the reopening of schools. Schools need to develop alternative procedures to ensure that students have access to learning if schools are closed for a long period of time. For example, schools could use Web-based instruction, mailed assignments, telephone homework hotlines or instruction on local radio or TV stations and in the newspaper.

Students with special needs, students who rely on schools for a hot meal and

students from families where English is a second language will be especially vulnerable in a health emergency. Local plans should include ways to communicate with these children and their parents about school and community programs.

Helping the community

Schools will be major community resources in the event of a health emergency. They have large refrigeration units and kitchens to prepare and serve meals to large groups. Gyms can be used for housing, community crisis centers and meeting places.

School buses can be used to transport people. And, districts with school-based health clinics can provide additional community health care centers.

The important thing for emergency and health care planners is to know in advance what services a school or district can provide. Then, in conjunction with those planners, educators can decide how to be partners in the planning and implementation of services during a flu pandemic.

Local health departments and emergency services will be the leads on planning for this kind of health emergency. The superintendent would be the key school contact. However, each superintendent may want to identify key personnel, including the district school health coordinator, to represent the district in community planning and follow-through.

Most decisions in the event of a flu pandemic will be made on the local level. However, the Department of Education staff and I will be ready to help districts in any way we can.

Already there are numerous resources available online to schools and districts from national health and government agencies involved in the U.S. pandemic planning. Planning checklists for child care and preschools, districts and K-12 schools, as well as postsecondary institutions, are available for downloading at www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/tab5.html.

Visit this and the Web sites in the box located on this page to learn more about what districts and schools should be doing to prepare for pandemic illness. Being prepared is the best defense.

(To comment on this topic, contact Commissioner Wilhoit at gene.wilhoit@education.ky.gov.)



Photo by Rick McComb

Many educators from Central Kentucky participated in the Bluegrass Region Pandemic Flu Summit held in March in Lexington. Representatives from education, business, industry, government, and health and human services met to learn more about local planning for a pandemic flu. Regional and local summits continue throughout the state until mid-June.

Right now, the disease is spreading to humans only through direct contact with infected birds. However, world health experts are monitoring disease reports closely and helping countries and communities prepare to deal with a pandemic if the flu begins spreading easily from person to person.

Certainly, no one can say for sure when — or if — such an outbreak will occur. Yet, world health experts know from past experience that flu pandemics do occur and are serious — very serious.

In 1918, the Spanish flu reached pandemic levels, killing more than a half million people in this country and 20 million to 30 million people worldwide. In my lifetime, the Asian flu (1957) killed about 70,000 people in this country, and the Hong Kong flu (1968) took 34,000 American lives.

Over the past 30 years, educators have

Online Flu Pandemic Resources

National and international government and health organizations have posted information on the Internet to help schools and districts prepare to meet the challenges of a pandemic flu.

www.pandemicflu.gov
www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic
www.dh.gov.uk/pandemicflu
www.hhs.gov/pandemicflu/plan
www.who.int/csr/disease/influenza/pandemic/en
www.whitehouse.gov/homeland/pandemic-influenza.html
www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cpip-pclcpi

Administrators find something powerful in their handheld PCs

By Faun S. Fishback

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The handheld PC has been a close companion for hundreds of Kentucky school administrators for several years. This device has revolutionized the way school leaders gather data about what is going on in their classrooms and schools. It has given administrators a quicker, better way to collect and manage the data they need to make decisions about teaching and learning in their schools.

This school year, a new program for the handheld devices is creating a buzz throughout the state's 176 school districts. The Web-based eWalk program offers users more flexibility in gathering school data. Users also have the ability to customize applications for specific school needs.

Once data is gathered, administrators can aggregate, analyze and chart data with the tap of the stylus or push of a button. That information can be shared in e-mails, PowerPoint presentations and hard-copy reports.

A little history

A little more than two years ago, grants from the Gates Foundation purchased handheld computers and provided training on the devices for more than 700 school and district administrators. Other administrators purchased their own handheld PCs and were trained to use the program.

The first-generation electronic "walkthrough" program was a big improvement over paper and pen. However, the more administrators used the first program, the more limitations they found.

Last year, the Kentucky Department of Education contracted with Media-X Systems to create a program for Kentucky educators that improved on the first walkthrough and offered the ability to customize the program to the needs of individual schools and districts. The eWalk gives users the flexibility for a wide variety of applications at both the school and district level.

The Professional Growth Branch of the department's Office of Leadership and School Improvement, conducts training on the eWalk program. The number of walkthrough observations is steadily increasing as more and more administrators learn to use the new program. From August 2005 to April 2006, more than 8,000 classroom observations have been conducted statewide using eWalk.

Administrators can receive free training on the eWalk program and use the service at no cost to their school or district. Educators who have not been trained on eWalk or would like

a refresher course on the new program can schedule a class by calling the Professional Development Branch at (502) 564-4201. Educators who would like access to eWalk can register for the program at www.education.ky.gov/web_collector/ewalk.htm. Participants do not have to have a handheld PC to participate in the three-hour training.

It's working in the field

Matt Thompson, principal at Deep Springs Elementary (Fayette County), began conducting classroom observations for more than 30 teachers using the handheld PC nearly two years ago. He finds eWalk much quicker and more user-friendly. "It allows me to capture a snapshot of classroom instruction much more quickly," he said. "I can e-mail the observation immediately to the teacher, which allows for quicker, richer feedback."

"These walkthroughs can be shared from one user to another, so it also increases the potential for collaboration between schools — for example, a high-performing school could share its walkthroughs with a lower-performing school," Thompson explained.

He also is interested in the possibilities eWalk offers for facilities management and other administrative duties. Thompson is creating an application that will allow him to note maintenance issues as he visits throughout the school. He can then e-mail a problem to the school's head custodian to have it corrected.

For years, administrators at Berea Independent Schools recorded classroom observations in triplicate on a paper form. Collating the data for more than 20 teachers was very labor-intensive, said Mike Hogg, principal at Berea Community Elementary.

He started using eWalk this school year and has found it much easier to document what's going on in the school. "You know what you're seeing in the classroom, you can get a lot of good information recorded quickly," he said. "Instead of using 'your gut feeling,' you have data to help you make more sound decisions."

Hogg also sees many applications for the eWalk. "Supporting instruction is the most important," he said. "However, it can be used in other aspects of school like with the technology folks, food services and custodial staff."

He also suggested that having the superintendent, district instructional supervisor and instructional technology supervisor use the eWalk and share their observations would help with school improvement. "The

more eyes, the more information," he said.

Michael Kessinger, assistant superintendent and chief information officer for Martin County Schools, conducts training for administrators in the district and makes certain the equipment and connections work properly. He also is an eWalk user. "As assistant superintendent, I've participated in the walkthrough in our schools and provided feedback through my observations back to the building principal and teachers," he said. "We have found that through a team effort, we can identify strengths and areas needing improvement in the instructional settings."

Eric Neff, principal at Two Rivers Middle School (Covington Independent), has been using the handheld PC for two years. He says he's able to complete more walkthrough observations now. In addition, he can use the device to check e-mails while he's away from his desk computer.

He shares walkthrough data with the school's 32 faculty members. "The instrument allows me to focus on individuals, teams and/or the whole school," Neff said. "I like being able to create graphs that show real numbers of data in regards to instructional practices that are taking place in all classrooms. The data identify specific practices that we need to focus on and implement more fully to meet individual student needs. The eWalk has allowed us to focus on specific areas that will impact student achievement."

Teachers at Mount Washington Middle School like the immediacy of getting feedback from an eWalk observation, said Principal Denise Allen. Although this is the first year she has used the program, she said, "I have a firm conviction that this tool is definitely an asset to a school's instructional leader."



Photo by Rick McComb

Shelli Wilson, principal at Cline Elementary (Campbell County) makes a notation on her handheld PC about a learning activity during a walkthrough observation. Campbell County administrators are among the heaviest users of the eWalk program to gather and analyze data for school improvement.

At the March faculty meeting, Allen made a presentation of the graphs she had compiled this year from eWalk classroom observations. She was able to point out weaknesses and strengths she had observed and recorded on her handheld PC.

"Several days later, a sixth-grade language arts teacher caught me in the hall," Allen said. "The teacher commented that after the faculty meeting she had reflected on what I had

said about the number of teacher-directed instructions that I was observing. She decided to incorporate more small group instruction in her class. The results had already indicated an improvement in student performance!"

For more information, contact the Professional Growth Branch at (502) 564-4201, or e-mail michael.vriesenga@education.ky.gov, john.fields@education.ky.gov.

Education e-mail addresses change

By mid-May, the e-mail addresses for most Kentucky teachers and administrators will have a different look. The Kentucky Department of Education's Office of Education Technology has been working for several months to upgrade the Kentucky Educational Technology System (KETS).

The upgrade for all districts is 80 percent complete. Work in the remaining districts will be completed this summer.

The upgrade improves speed, junk-mail management and virus protection for users. In addition, users have a more user-friendly access to Outlook Web Access, or Webmail, from any computer anywhere in the world.

The visible change for KETS users is in the configuration of the e-mail address. In districts where the upgrade has occurred, e-mail addresses now appear `firstname.lastname@district.`

`kyschools.us`.

Although the "old" e-mail addresses will be recognized through December 2006, school and district employees should begin updating stationery, business cards, Web sites and other items that communicate e-mail addresses, as well as personal contact lists and distribution lists that contain e-mail addresses from the Kentucky Department of Education, their schools or districts and other schools and districts.

Last fall, the department served as the pilot for the upgrade to allow time to resolve any problems with statewide installation. E-mail addresses for department personnel are configured `firstname.lastname@education.ky.gov`.

Kentucky's is the first education system in the nation to provide an e-mail upgrade of this magnitude.

Three Reading First schools recognized for improvement

Two years ago, Kentucky received nearly \$89 million from the U.S. Department of Education to implement the Reading First program in 74 Title I-eligible elementary schools. The schools are receiving \$130,000 to \$170,000 each year for six years to implement scientifically research-based programs to increase the reading skills of students, with an emphasis on the primary years.

The intense teacher professional development, increased access to instructional resources and regular assessment of students' reading skills are paying off for many Kentucky Reading First schools. In recent months, three of the participating schools have been recognized for increasing student skills:

- Chancellors Elementary (Logan County) posted the highest reading scores in 2005 among Reading First schools on the Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE) reading assessment.
- Martha Jane Potter Elementary (Letcher County) recorded the highest Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) scores in the state among Reading First schools.
- Deep Springs Elementary (Fayette County) was featured in a Feb. 17 *USA Today* news article about the success of the Reading First program nationwide. The article pointed out how the \$170,000 annual federal grant has helped the school overhaul its reading program, hire teachers dedicated to reading instruction and purchase new books and instructional materials. According to Principal Matt Thompson, students reading at grade level

more than doubled to about 66 percent in the first year of the program.

All Reading First schools dedicate 90 minutes a day to reading instruction. Teachers work with the whole group initially, then move to small-group work at centers to reinforce the program's focus on phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency and phonemic awareness (the ability to recognize sounds in words).

Struggling readers get up to an hour of additional reading services. Reading time is a "protected reading block," according to Lana Whitaker, Chancellors Reading First coach. That means no interruptions during reading instruction.

Teachers assess students three times a year using the GRADE and DIBELS tests. They also use other assessments to routinely screen, diagnose and monitor student reading progress. Teachers use the assessment data to make instructional decisions for all students.

"I have watched the teachers become more confident, make well-informed decisions and use data daily to make instructional decisions for their students," said Wendy M. Mullins, Reading First coach at Martha Jane Potter Elementary. "They are truly planning, carrying out and evaluating their instructional practices based on student achievement data."

Support from school and district administrators also is vital to an effective Reading First program. "Both (former and current) principals are dedicated 100 percent to the success of Reading First in our school," Mullins said. "Our superintendent participates in schoolwide literacy

events, visits to read to students and visits classrooms to encourage teachers and observe their successes."

Participating schools have a Reading First School Coach who coordinates the program, coaches teachers, models lessons and provides professional development training. Ten State Reading First Coaches also work at the state level to provide professional development for the School and District Reading First Coaches. In addition, a Literacy Specialist in each of the state's 11 special education cooperatives develops

and delivers Reading First professional development for special education and regular education teachers (P-12).

Teachers at Reading First schools must complete 80 hours of professional development training in scientifically based reading instruction. They learn how to refine reading instruction, how to use the assessment data to make instructional decisions and how to individualize instruction to bring every student to potential. For some teachers, it means big changes in their teaching methods, Whitaker said.

During the last two years, the Kentucky Reading First program has been offering literacy professional development to teachers at all grade levels. This summer, multiple opportunities will be available for all teachers P-12.

For more information about the Reading First program and activities, go to www.education.ky.gov and click on "KDE Quick-Links." Scroll down and click on "Reading First." Contact: Linda Holbrook, or Sharla Six, (502) 564-2106, linda.holbrook@education.ky.gov or sharla.six@education.ky.gov



Photo by Rick McComb

Ready with an answer

Pike County Central High School senior Randa Newman answers the phone for the district's Technology Help Desk located in the high school. She is one of 28 students who provide technology support and troubleshoot problems with computers, printers and hard drives and gain experience they'll use in future work.

Teachers can explore health careers this summer

Teachers looking for ways to connect classroom learning to health-related careers can find several resources from the Kentucky Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) program. The statewide program partners with schools to provide mathematics and science enrichment, health careers programming and health screenings for students.

June 19-23, the South Central AHEC, based at Western Kentucky University, will conduct a teacher academy to acquaint teachers (grades 5-12) with health careers programming. The weeklong professional develop-

ment session will immerse teachers into the world of health care through presentations and exper-

iential activities. During the session, participants will job shadow health professionals at T.J. Samson Community Hospital in Glasgow.

"I feel the most useful resource I gained was the hands-on shadowing I did at the hospital," said a recent academy member. "My knowledge was greatly enhanced by personally observing and discussing with the staff as they went about their daily routines. This was great info that I can pass along to my students."

Participants also will learn how to implement "Exploring Faces of Opportunities," a health careers curriculum with 25 modules. Teachers will discover how to apply the curriculum to meet Kentucky's

Academic Expectations, Core Content for Assessment and Program of Studies standards.

Teachers who attend the summer academy will receive the complete health careers curriculum, additional teaching supplies and a \$500 stipend. More than 40 teachers have attended the training since it began in 2003.

During the 2003-2004 school year, teachers used the health careers curriculum with more than 1,800 Kentucky students. The academy is funded by the Kentucky Department of Education and grants.

Additionally, the AHEC program can provide classroom presentations by staff in the statewide network of eight regional AHEC centers and program offices at the University of Louisville's Health Sciences Center and the University of Kentucky

Medical Center. During the past year, the Kentucky AHEC provided 334 health careers programs to more than 11,200 Kentucky students in grades P-16.

Because more than half of Kentucky counties have a shortage of healthcare services or health professionals, a central mission of the Kentucky AHEC program is to promote lifelong learning for all Kentuckians with particular emphasis on recruiting and retaining health professionals for underserved areas of the state.

For more information about the summer teacher academy in Glasgow, contact Glynnda Stone at (270) 745-3325, glynnda.stone@wku.edu. To request a classroom presentation on health careers, go to the AHEC Web site at www.louisville.edu/medschool/ahec and click on "AHEC Staff."



Photo submitted by South Central AHEC

Participants in the summer AHEC teacher academy will job shadow health professionals at T.J. Samson Community Hospital in Glasgow.

Web-enabled Individual Learning Plan coming to schools this fall

By Cathy Lindsey

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Kentucky's public school students will soon be able to plan their education online. Beginning in the fall, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) will roll out the new Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

This new tool is a Web-enabled individual planning system for students. The ILP will eventually replace the current paper-based Individual Graduation Plan (IGP).

In order to graduate from a public high school, Kentucky students currently must complete an IGP. This plan incorporates information about a student's career interests and career goals with identification of courses and services needed to make the transition from high school to a successful life after high school. Students will continue to complete an IGP until the online ILP is available at their schools.

The new ILP will contain the same information that the students gathered with the IGP; however, it offers more features and resources. Not only will the ILP contain transcript-like information, it also will include student education plan information and offer the ability to upload media files and pictures. This will help give a complete picture of the student's learning plan – past, present and future, said Julia Harmon, a consultant in the Division of Secondary and Virtual Learning branch of the Kentucky Department of Education.

The recently revised regulation that contains the high school minimum graduation requirements states that students entering the sixth grade in the 2006-2007 school year will begin developing their ILP. Harmon said the department recommends starting the new plan in the sixth grade with career exploration, interest inventory and goal setting.

"It's all about the students and making their journey through the public school system as meaningful and purposeful as possible," said Harmon. "This ILP tool will do just that."

"It not only is a house to hold all students' important educational information," Harmon said, "but it is a valuable tool by which they can plan, explore and reflect on how they, as students, have a part in what they do with their future education."

Students may work through many features in the ILP such as Career Matchmaker, Resume Builder, Goals and Plans, Activities and Experiences, Awards and Recognition and Education Planner. The ILP also will be integrated with the

GoHigherKY Web site (www.GoHigherKY.org), an online resource for higher education in Kentucky. This site can help students with college planning, tuition and applications.

"These features together will create a unified, easily accessible portfolio of the student's education accomplishments and goals that we hope will serve the students of Kentucky in many ways," Harmon said.

According to Harmon, the planning process for the ILP will engage students and parents, as well as teachers and school administrators. The new ILP provides students instant access to many details concerning their education all in one place. Students and their parents can access the ILP anytime from any computer with an Internet connection.

"I see this tool as a door of opportunity. Schools will use it in different ways and see ways to use it that KDE has not even considered," Harmon said. "The opportunities are endless."

The new ILP will help schools and districts plan education programs and opportunities to meet the needs and interests of their students, she said. Courses and staffing can be customized to the educational and career interests of the students as they enter high school.

"It will also be a good tool to inform middle schools about the exploratory options in which their students might be interested," Harmon said. "When career interest data is available as early as the sixth grade, this will allow administrators to plan for their future students' needs."

KDE consultants believe the ILP will play a key role in the advising component of the students' education. Students will be able to engage in advising and guidance specific to their educational goals based around the ILP. The new tool will allow students to electronically share documents they feel are representative of their educational experience and level with anyone they wish.

"Students will be able to create, review and reflect on their goals, plans and interests that will lead them to the postsecondary experience they desire," Harmon said.

Teachers can use this tool to better know their students. Teachers as advisers will have the space to record advising topics, notes and reflection that should enable more precise advising activities.

"Teachers can quickly access information that will better inform them about the students' interests and where they need some more attention or advice," Harmon said. "This will make the teacher's job of advising the student much easier and

"Teachers can quickly access information that will better inform them about the students' interests and where they need some more attention or advice."

Julia Harmon
Division of Secondary and
Virtual Learning



Photo by Rick McComb

Johnny Sue Bauer, Business Department chair at Scott High School, discusses the results of a career assessment activity with students Ashley Pyles and Dana Smith. The Kenton County school uses Career Cruising materials to help students prepare for postsecondary studies and careers.

more meaningful."

After an extensive evaluation of products, the Department of Education awarded the ILP contract to Career Cruising. This company has been developing online career guidance resources since 1997. Career Cruising is crafting an online ILP specifically to meet the needs of Kentucky students. Harmon said two major strengths of the product were user-interface and depth of material related to career counseling.

ILP in Kenton County

Several Kentucky schools and districts are already using the Career Cruising product. Teri Brown, director of State and Emerging Programs for Kenton County Schools, said students there have been using the product since last fall. She thinks middle and high schools will love the new ILP once it is introduced statewide.

"It allows us to share information with students and parents in a way we've never been able to do before," she said.

Brown said the ILP has been a great tool in making the connection with parents. She said it has helped engage parents to stay involved in the education of their children, which can help their students be more successful.

According to Brown, the ILP has helped teachers indicate the students' individual strengths and interests. It also has helped students begin self-exploration and career exploration to facilitate their transition

into postsecondary education and work, she said.

Harmon expects the ILP tool to be ready this summer for all schools. Schools already using Career Cruising should continue to do so until modifications are made to the product to meet Kentucky's ILP requirements. Also, students should continue to use the paper-based IGP until their school has made the transition to the online ILP.

Department of Education staff will make presentations about the online ILP at conferences this fall, as well as hold Career Cruising trainings throughout the state. Teachers and administrators should watch for information about the ILP from Commissioner Gene Wilhoit, the Instructional Support Network and articles in *Kentucky Teacher*, Harmon said.

"We are working to create a training schedule so that as many schools as possible can start using this valuable tool with their students in the fall," Harmon said.

The department anticipates that by the end of October every school will have had an opportunity to have a team trained. Those teams would then be responsible for training the teachers, staff and personnel in their districts to use the ILP.

"We are very excited to see this tool becoming a reality for the students of Kentucky," Harmon said. "It will truly make a difference in their lives."

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Lancaster Elementary fifth graders learn to be scientists

By Joy Barr

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Students at Lancaster Elementary are learning to be scientists, performing experiments as part of a program that is unique in Kentucky public schools. Dorothy Murphy's fifth-grade science class in this Garrard County school worked with volunteer Dan Nieves of Nicholasville to hatch trout in a tabletop cold-water habitat and release them into their natural habitat.

Murphy explained that her students go through the processes that scientists use in collecting and recording data, observing, and coming up with a result. Many aspects of core content are addressed as the class progresses through the entire scientific process.

Nieves built the tabletop hatchery for Murphy's classroom. He used everyday materials — a small insulated aquarium, 25 feet of vinyl tubing, a 10-gallon cooler filled with ice, a plastic hatching tray and a pump — to construct the habitat.

Cold creek water circulates through the system to keep the

eggs continually rinsed, as if they were naturally deposited in the gravel of a mountain stream where wild trout reproduce. "It's much like a stream in the Smoky Mountains or in Eastern Kentucky where fish propagate," said Nieves.

Nieves, who works for Norfolk Southern Railroad in Knoxville, Tenn., delivered approximately 2,000 rainbow trout eggs to Lancaster Elementary. Students estimated that approximately 1,000 eggs, or about half, arrived unfertilized. Students quickly removed the white, unfertilized eggs from the habitat over the first few days to prevent any fungus from developing, which could kill the remaining healthy orange eggs.

Students monitored and cared for the eggs approximately 40 days by keeping the water in the habitat the correct temperature and checking and correcting, if necessary, the pH balance. Students checked the temperature and pH every morning and late afternoon in order to maintain actual conditions of a mountain stream. They recorded all of the

data on a large chart in the classroom. On weekends, Murphy returned to school and tended to the habitat duties.

"This is an innovative learning tool that is both meaningful and relevant to students," noted Murphy. "It's real science. We can look at pictures in books, but this is so different. They can look right beside them (the eggs) and see those things in action," she said. "Every morning, the first children through the door rush right to the fish habitat to check on things. All are anxious for their turn to care for the system. And, once the fish hatch, feeding becomes another important duty, since we want them to be as big as possible before releasing them."

Each day, students were responsible for putting creek water in the aquarium and adding ice from the school cafeteria to the cooler. They had to check the temperature and maintain it between 50 and 60 degrees, test the pH levels and add the vinegar to the water to keep it at a neutral level. The fifth-graders also were respon-



Dan Nieves, a volunteer who worked with Dorothy Murphy's fifth-grade class, explains to the students how to release the young trout into the farm pond.



Photos by Rick McComb

Lancaster Elementary fifth graders Stephen Bond and Jordan Denson gently release trout into a farm pond as the culminating event for the nearly three-month class experiment and study of trout and aquatic life.

sible for keeping good records of their work.

The students' excitement, enthusiasm and wonder were evident in the classroom as they engaged in real-world science activities. The project gave students a hands-on means of studying life cycles and habitats, said Murphy, a science teacher who has taught at Lancaster Elementary for 16 years.

"This is the third time Dan has helped me with this project, and it's one of my most favorite times of the year, simply because I know the children are learning and enjoying every minute of the work they're doing. Years from now, when they think of their fifth-grade year, I think they will remember hatching the fish," said Murphy.

"The students are getting hands-on experience," she said. "They learn to use a microscope and how to be responsible for taking care of the hatchery and the eggs, and eventually the fish."

Nieves, who donated many hours in the classroom to the science experiment, agrees. "You just have to see this to believe it," he said. "It really teaches the students a lot of responsibility. They have to keep it going or the fish will die."

An important part of the experiment is that it requires

the students to become involved. "It's not something that just sets here," Nieves said. "Every day they have something to do."

It is a time-consuming project that requires a commitment from the teacher and the students. "Fish, unlike humans and other mammals, don't have babies in nine months," said Nieves. "Trout has no set gestation period. Usually it takes 26 to 28 days to hatch, if everything goes right."

After the eggs hatched, the students moved the fry, or small fish, to a 30-gallon aquarium for another three to four weeks. Students fed the trout until they were large enough to be released. Then the class took a field trip to release the fish in a private, spring-fed pond on the farm of Marlene McCollough, former Lancaster Elementary principal.

Although the experiment is fun, Nieves and Murphy know the students are learning every step of the way. The experiment teaches students about cold water habitats, how to care for the trout eggs, proper pH levels, temperature, dissection, the effects of acid rain and environmental factors, as well as some mathematics skills.

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Students let their voices be heard about education

By Cathy Lindsey

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Have you heard about “The Good, The Bad and The Ugly?” It’s a topic students across the state have been talking about. If you’re over 18, you might be surprised to find out that it’s not the classic Clint Eastwood spaghetti western they’ve been discussing.

Kentucky middle and high school students are sharing their views on their secondary education experiences and how to make them a more rewarding and relevant experience for future students. They’ve categorized their experiences as “The Good, The Bad and The Ugly.”

As part of its Refocusing Secondary Education initiative, the Kentucky Department of Education hosted eight student summits throughout the state this school year. The “Voices of Reason” student summits allowed more than 2,000 middle and high school students to voice their likes, dislikes and concerns about the public education they are receiving.

“We found that students want more meaningful roles,” said Debbie Powers, a consultant in the department’s Division of Secondary and Virtual Learning, “They liked being asked. They value having input.”

At each summit, “The Good, The Bad and The Ugly,” session gave students a chance to talk about their schools. Students indicated the “good” and the “bad” involved many cultural issues.

It was the “ugly” that provided the most feedback in light of recent Refocusing Secondary Education discussions. That portion of the session asked students to indicate what changes they thought need to be made for students to be successful in the 21st century.

Students at every summit said they want to be challenged. They want more learning opportunities that are relevant to what they want to do in life. They need more guidance from adults to help them prepare for college and work.

The statewide summits started as one student’s senior project at North Oldham High School (Oldham County). Andrew McCormick wanted to give students a voice about their own education. After leading focus groups in five districts with other students, McCormick and another North Oldham senior, Meredith Griers, presented their findings to the Kentucky Board of Education at its June 2005 meeting.

McCormick said student responses from the focus groups showed that students feel unprepared for the next step. They feel they need a more personalized education. They need better relationships with faculty, and they need a more supportive transition from middle to high school.

The focus groups offered suggestions on how to address these issues, but one major



Marion County High School students Laurel Peterson, top left, Jordan Essex, Calvin Drye and Danielle Bell look for results from the “Voices of Reason” student summits that are posted on the Kentucky Department of Education’s Web site.

theme was clear. McCormick and Griers told the board that students needed more voice in a discussion about their education. As a result, the “Voices of Reason” summits came to life.

“The board determined that one of the most critical elements in making decisions

needs, what is not working, what needs to be improved and what needs to be reinforced.

In November 2005, summits were held in Somerset, Prestonsburg, Shepherdsville, Murray and Erlanger. Student responses at the summits showed the need for three more summits, which were held in Harlan, Bowling Green and Owensboro in 2006.

In addition to “The Good, The Bad and The Ugly” session, students got to address other issues at the sessions. “Movin’ On Up – Middle to High School Transitions” gave students the opportunity to say what worked for their transition, what would have worked better and what they would like to see happen. Again, students responded with the need for higher expectations from teachers, better relationships with teachers and interactive activities between

middle and high schools.

Other sessions included: “Senior Projects: Vaccination for Senioritis,” “Career and Tech Ed: Possibilities for the Future,” “Virtual Learning: The Future is Now,” “Hot Jobs for the Future,” “Graduates: What You Should Know,” “Student Voices in Your School: Leadership Options,” “Youth as Advocates: Learn to Make Your Voice Heard in Frankfort,” and “Talkin’ ‘Bout My Generation.”

In addition, the student summits included a session for teachers and district personnel titled “Creating a Culture for Change.” The adults also were able to sit in on some of the student sessions.

According to Carroll, the discussions, results and follow-up from the summits are being used to assist the department, districts and schools in the Refocusing Secondary initiative. Student input will help guide decision-making about how to better prepare students for the next level of learning and how to personalize and individualize instruction and services to meet the needs of all students.

The work also will focus on how to strengthen student and faculty relationships so that each student has advocates and mentors to help them make decisions, and how adults in schools facilitate transitions for students to the next levels of learning, Carroll said.

The department will share information from the summits with other districts throughout the state.

“This can help back up work they are already doing or it can help them host a student summit of their own,” said Powers. “Our hope is that they can personalize those and really bring student voice to the table.”

As a result of the summits, the Department of Education is forming a student advisory group. Also, the department has asked students to present proposals on a model advisory panel.

“We found some phenomenal student leaders,” Powers said. “We know they can help us fix the problem of retention, and they can help us provide a smoother transition from middle to high school.”

Powers said students have taken information back to their schools and, in many cases, are working with their school leaders to put ideas into action. Students have made presentations to their school councils and local school boards on the issues they have discussed at the summit. Many students are working to improve their schools based on conversations from the summits.

“Students have really taken an active role in the life of their schools,” Powers said.

For more information about the summits, go to the Kentucky Department of Education Web site at www.education.ky.gov. Click on “KDE QuickLinks” in the upper right-corner of the page and select “Refocusing Secondary Education.” Scroll down that page to “What Kentucky Students Say” and click.

Contact: Debbie Powers, (502) 564-4772, debbie.powers@education.ky.gov

“We know they can help us fix the problem of retention, and they can help us provide a smoother transition from middle to high school.”

Debbie Powers
Division of Secondary and Virtual Learning

about how to improve and strengthen our middle and high school programs should be based on hearing and understanding what students have to say about their own experiences,” said Jennifer Carroll, the department’s Secondary Education Branch Manager.

She said this included what programs and services are helping to meet student

Photo by Rick McComb

2006

from Page 1

who is at least 5 years of age, but less than 6 years of age, may be advanced through the primary program if the student is determined to have acquired the academic and social skills taught in kindergarten as determined by local board policy. Authorizes the Kentucky Board of Education to establish the process by administrative regulation for determining when a child may attend a full-day program. (SB 35)

Veterans Day: Requires all public schools to hold Veterans Day programs. Encourages schools to seek advice from the Kentucky Department of Veterans' Affairs and other veterans' organizations. (SB 47)

Education leadership preparation programs: Requires the establishment of an interagency task force to coordinate the redesign of education leadership programs. (HJR 14)

Constitution and democratic processes: Directs development of strategies and a timeline for improving Kentucky students' knowledge and understanding of the U.S. Constitution and the democratic processes. Requires a final report by Aug. 1, 2007, and a draft implementation plan by Dec. 1, 2007. (HJR 145)

School employees

Kentucky School for the Blind and the Kentucky School for the Deaf: Clarifies that certified teachers at these schools have the same rights and benefits as certified teachers in public schools. Protects accrued leave and years of experience for teachers at these schools. Establishes hiring and job assignment practices. (SB 239)

Injuries on the job: Requires a school district to coordinate benefits for a teacher or an employee for work time lost because of an assault while on duty so there is no loss of salary or benefits. (SB 51)

School employees on military duty: Requires granting a leave of absence to a certified employee ordered to active military duty. Requires the state to pay the employee's retirement contribution. (HB 79)

National Board Certified Teachers: Clarifies that a teacher retains Rank I status gained upon National Board certification unless the certificate is revoked for misconduct or voided for other reasons. (HB 125)

Teacher drug testing: Requires random drug testing for up to 12 months for a teacher disciplined for illegal use of controlled substances and drug testing for a teacher whose certificate is suspended or revoked if illegal use is established in administrative or judicial proceeding. Authorizes a superintendent to transfer an employee who is charged with any felony offense without loss of pay. (HB 341)

School safety and health

Sex offenders and criminal records checks: Relating to the prohibition of a sex offender residing within 1,000 feet of a school, the bill changes how distance is measured. Authorizes a superintendent to require national and state criminal history background checks for contractors on campus when students are present. (HB 3)

Power of attorney for school decisions: Creates KinCare Support Program to provide information and referrals to grandparents who are caring for minors. Requires development of a standard power of attorney to allow grandparents the authority to consent to medical treatment and to make school-related decisions for a minor. (HB 45)

Building lockdown: Requires lockdown procedures to be established for school buildings and practiced once a year. (HB 206)

Meningococcal meningitis disease: Requires districts to provide information on this disease and its vaccine to parents and guardians of students in grades 6–12 if other health-related information is provided at the beginning of the school year. (HB 475)

Health education: Encourages public schools to include age-appropriate education within the existing health curriculum on the risks from ultraviolet ray exposure. (HB 589)

Wellness and physical activity: Establishes the Governor's Council on Wellness and Physical Activity and sets requirements for its operation. (HB 646)

Students

Military duty: Requires that a student called to federal military active duty receive credit for academic work and reasonable time to make up missed work. (HB 80)

Student attendance

Truancy: Permits an assistant to the director of pupil personnel to perform the

director's required duties without being certified. Requires documentation of contact with the custodian of the student when ascertaining the causes of irregular attendance and truancy. (HB 479)

Expelled or suspended students: Defines "behavior which constitutes a threat." Changes the standard for providing services to a student expelled from the regular school setting. (HB 688)

Taxes

Taxation: Allows school districts in the same county to enter into an agreement to allocate utility gross receipts tax revenues based on the average daily attendance for the previous year. Allows for refunds from current or future collections allocated to the affected districts. (HB 403)

Technology

Education technology interoperability: Directs a study of specifications for statewide education data designed to facilitate the exchange of information at the local, state and federal levels. Requires completion of study no later than Nov. 1. (HB 341)

The legislature also confirmed the governor's appointments and reappointments to the Education Professional Standards Board and the Kentucky Board of Education. (HCR 39, John G. Cibulka; 42, Lorraine G. Williams; 222, John Douglas Hubbard; 224, C.B. Akins Sr.; 225, Jeanne H. Ferguson; 226, R. Keith Travis; 227, Wilburn Joe Brothers, and 229, Kathryn R. Baird.)

LEGISLATIVE

from Page 1

of instruction will be required to add two six-hour instructional days to the number of days in their calendars approved in 2005-2006.

The new budget also provides General Fund appropriations for these programs: **Preschool:** increases the current funding for preschool to \$75.1 million, requires districts to serve students whose family income is up to 150 percent of the federal poverty level, and local districts are directed to fully utilize the local HeadStart program. The budget establishes penalties for noncompliance and procedures for dispute resolution; **Technology:** provides bonding to establish a high-speed education telecommunications network for P-16 management, instruction and research applications, for collection and management of student information and to upgrade workstations in P-12 schools (\$50 million bonded over five years) and provides \$5 million each fiscal year to enhance technology in school districts within coal-producing counties; **Read to Achieve:** provides additional General Funds to expand the reading program - \$9.4 million in FY 2007 and \$12.4 in FY 2008; **State Agency Children:** provides additional support for the education of children in state agency programs - \$500,000 each fiscal year; **Mathematics Achievement Fund:** provides an additional \$3.9 million in FY 2008 for training early intervention teachers and for school mathematics grants; **ACT and WorkKeys:** provides \$1.4 million for ACT and WorkKeys testing for high school students in FY 2008; **Community Educa-**

tion: includes \$300,000 each fiscal year to support the establishment of 15 additional community education programs; **Partnership for Student Success:** includes \$430,000 in FY 2008 to develop pilot programs to demonstrate effective strategies to increase community and parental involvement in K-12 education; and **Family Resource and Youth Service Centers:** includes \$1.5 million in FY 2007 and \$3.0 million in FY 2008 to increase per-eligible-child allocation in FY 2007, nearly \$1.1 million to expand

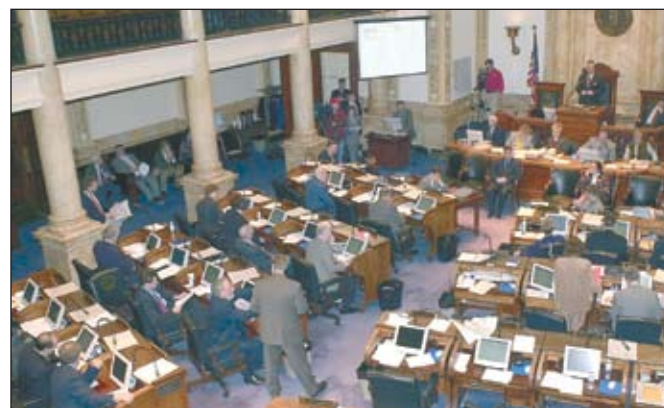


Photo by LRC Public Information

the program by 25 schools in FY 2007 and \$2.4 million to serve 29 additional schools in FY 2008 (included in the Cabinet for Health and Family Services budget).

The budget bill also makes these special provisions: gives additional flexibility to the state and local school districts in allocating Professional Development, Extended School Services, Preschool, Textbooks and Safe Schools funds; allows

up to 10 percent of any non-SEEK grant funds, with the exception of Read to Achieve Program monies, unexpended during FY 2007 to be carried forward to FY 2008; requires districts to publish their complete annual financial statement and the school report card in the newspaper of the largest general circulation in the county, electronically on the Internet, or by printed copy at a prearranged site at the main branch of the public library within the school district; requires money remaining in flexible spending accounts

of local school district employees for calendar year 2006 and calendar year 2007 transferred to the General Fund; allows excused absences for students whose parents or guardians have been called to federal military active duty on the day the family member is deployed and the day the family member returns, gives these students the opportunity to make up missed school work and be considered present for purposes of calculating average daily attendance.

The legislature provided \$150 million in bonds for school facilities through the School Facilities Construction Commission. An additional \$100 million was authorized in offers of assistance that cannot be accessed until the next biennium (2008-2010).

The Urgent Need School Trust Fund has been established to help school districts and area vocational centers that have urgent and critical construction needs. An advisory committee will develop guidelines for the distribution of funds by Sept. 30. The legislature appropriated \$5 million in FY 2008 to the fund.

The legislature also directed the Department of Education, in partnership with the School Facilities Construction Commission, to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the current school facilities planning process. Findings and recommendations will be reported by Sept. 30 and used in determining the 2006 offers of assistance to local school districts.

The budget bill also directs the Kentucky Department of Education to evaluate school calendars to determine their positive and negative effects on students as well as the impact on school district operations and finances. A preliminary report will be given to the Interim Joint Committee on Education by Nov. 15. A final report, including recommendations for regulatory or statutory changes, will go to the Interim Joint Committee on Education by Jan. 15, 2007.

Legislators also directed the Legislative Research Commission, through the budget bill, to contract with nongovernmental consultants for a study of the current funding formula and the equitable disbursement of pupil transportation funds. The consultants' final report will be made to the Interim Joint Committees on Education and on Appropriations and Revenue no later than July 1, 2007.

BOARD from Page 1

student and teacher time in preparing the portfolio.

Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, schools cannot offer classes for the sole purpose of completing a writing portfolio for accountability purposes. The proposed regulation also would require that when a student transfers to another school or district, the working folder be sent to the receiving school in a timely manner with the student's transcript.

The regulation requires that writing instruction be included as a component of literacy instruction and not isolated for the purpose of assessment. It also clarifies writing tasks, the selection of cluster leaders and teacher involvement in scoring the portfolio.

A public hearing will be held on the regulations May 30 at 2 p.m. in Frankfort. Individuals interested in being heard at the hearing should notify the Kentucky Department of Education in writing five working days prior to the hearing. Written comments also will be accepted until May 31. If no notification of intent to attend the hearing is received by that date, the hearing may be canceled.

More information on participating in the public hearing can be found on the department's Web site at www.education.ky.gov. Click on "Administrative Resources" in the menu across the top of the page and then select "Legal and Legislative Services" in the left-hand menu.

After a presentation and discussion of norm-referenced test (NRT) issues, the board approved policy recommendations that will affect portions of the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) by doing the following:

- Replacing the current norm-referenced test, the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS), at grade nine with diagnostic/predictive tests at grades eight and ten
- Eliminating CTBS at the end of primary (grade three), except for those tests used to aid in the identification of gifted and talented students
- Moving the grade six CTBS testing from spring to fall to provide a national comparison as students move from elementary to middle school

The board will make final decisions on these recommendations at a future meeting.

The board approved recommendations to implement four changes that will impact state reporting of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) data in August 2006. Those changes are:

- Calculating a proxy for special education students as defined by the U.S. Department of Education and applying only to schools that do not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) solely on the basis of the performance of students with disabilities
- Invoking the Wellstone Amendment,

Social Studies content adds historic time designations

As part of its review of the revised "Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools Primary – 12," the Kentucky Board of Education approved an amendment to include in the document two designations for the periods of measured time. In addition to using the historic dates B.C. (Before Christ) or A.D. (Anno Domini, in the year of the Lord), curriculum activities may also refer to B.C.E. (Before the Common Era) or C.E. (Common Era).

Teachers won't be required to present students with the information, but they may choose to include it in their units of study.

Kentucky Social Studies teachers and Department of Education staff recommended adding the references because numerous textbooks and historical education resources have adopted the B.C.E. and C.E. designations. Students will still see B.C. and A.D. in some social studies materials. National organizations, such as The College Board and The National World History Standards, also have adopted the standard.

The Program of Studies outlines the minimum content standards required for high school graduation in Kentucky, as well as primary, intermediate and middle-level programs leading up to those requirements.

which enables a state that does not currently test mathematics and reading in grades 3-8 under its state standards-based system to use data from grades that are tested to determine AYP

- Modifying state reporting to reflect all tested students, which will include students who have not been enrolled in a school or district for a full academic year
- Revising the standard-setting plan for the augmented NRT, a slight change to the state's original plan for standard-setting

The board also heard a report from the Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA) on the work of its task force and bylaw amendments from the KHSAA Board of Control. The report concerned proposals that would prevent recruiting of athletes by public and private schools. The board directed KHSAA officials to place the proposed bylaw amendments before the group's membership for a vote, as required under the KHSAA constitution.

Each spring, the board establishes the per-child rates for the Kentucky Preschool Program for the next school year based on the upcoming budget approved by the state legislature. The program serves 3- and 4-year-old children with disabilities and 4-year-olds who are eligible for the free-lunch program. It provides a minimum of a half-day developmentally appropriate program with services that include transportation, meals and parent training.

The 2006 General Assembly allocated \$75.1 million each year for the next two years for the state's preschool program.

(See story on Page 1.) Because of increased preschool funding in the state budget this year, the board voted to send a letter of appreciation to legislators and Gov. Ernie Fletcher.

In addition, the board reviewed the 2006 Elementary and Secondary Budget as approved by the General Assembly. The budget requires a 2 percent salary increase in Fiscal Year 2007 and \$3,000 increase in Fiscal Year 2008 for certified employees. All salary increases are in addition to increases provided for changes in rank or additional experience. The budget also provides funding for two additional instructional days for the 2007-2008 school year.

State Rep. Frank Rasche, chair of the House Education Committee, presented citations to outgoing members of the board in gratitude for their years of service to Kentucky's public education system. Terms expired at the end of April for board members Janice Allen, Dorie Combs, Jeff Mando, Helen Mountjoy, Hilma Prather and David Tachau. New board members will be sworn in at the board retreat in May.

The board will hold its annual retreat on May 10 and 11 at Natural Bridge State Resort Park in Slade. It is expected that no business will be conducted. The next regular meeting of the board will be June 13 and 14 in Frankfort. More information about the board is available online at www.education.ky.gov. Click on "KDE QuickLinks" in the upper right-hand corner. Scroll down to "State Board of Education" and click.



Photos by Rick McComb

Teamwork makes it happen!

Students at the Anderson County Early Childhood Center get a workout and a lesson in teamwork during recess on a cool spring day. Students and their teachers hold strategic points of a colorful parachute (top photo) and fluff it in the air so that members of the class can take turns running from side to side under the canopy.

Changed your address?

Kentucky Teacher receives mailing addresses for all active Kentucky certified classroom teachers and administrators from the Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System. If you are employed by a Kentucky public school, you can change your address or mailing information in one of two ways:

Complete a change of address form that can be downloaded from the retirement system's Web site at <http://ktrs.ky.gov/ktrsresources/MEMinfo/chgaddrnew.htm>.

Submit a written request that includes your old address, new address, your Social Security number and your signature.

Mail the form or your written request to:

Kentucky Teachers'
Retirement System
ATTN: Tammy Brown
479 Versailles Rd.
Frankfort, KY 40601

If you are not a current teacher or administrator, e-mail your change of address to kyteacher@education.ky.gov or send your change of address information in writing to:

Kentucky Teacher
612 Capital Plaza Tower
500 Mero St.
Frankfort, KY 40601

Leadership Letter

Compiled by Joy Barr
joy.barr@education.ky.gov

Applicants sought for minority program

Educators interested in participating in the 2006-2007 Minority Superintendent Internship Program (MSIP) have until May 26 to apply. The MSIP was created three years ago by the Kentucky Department of Education to help identify and train a pool of highly qualified ethnic minority superintendent candidates for Kentucky public school districts.

MSIP participants work in school districts alongside veteran superintendents. This non-traditional program emphasizes the development of leadership skills to increase student learning, including skills in the areas of management, strategic planning, fiscal oversight, communications, community engagement, the politics of education and analyses of current exemplary teaching and learning strategies.

Two graduates of the program, Elaine Farris (Shelby County) and Diane Woods (Campbellsville Independent), currently are serving as Kentucky public school superintendents.

The program will begin in late June and run through June 2007. Applicants should be certified or close to fulfilling superintendent certification. Applicants may call the department's Division of Educator Quality and Diversity at (502) 564-1479 for more information and an application packet.

KTLC presenters

The Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference (KTLC) invites proposals from educators to present at KTLC 2007, which will be held in Louisville March 8-10, 2007. To be considered, the presentation must focus on any aspect of teaching, learning or school management. A committee of educators will review all proposals, and educators who submit the best proposals will be invited to participate in the conference. All applicants are expected to use materials and language that do not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age or physical ability.

The strongest proposals will provide educators with proven strategies and tools, and will align with Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment and Kentucky's core beliefs about education.

KTLC is an excellent opportunity to showcase your successes so that other educators—as well as students—can benefit from them!

Visit www.kentuckytlc.org after May 15 or contact Thelma Whiteside, (502) 564-3421, thelma.whiteside@education.ky.gov.

New HSEs selected

Twenty-two Kentucky educators were selected in April to serve as Highly Skilled Educators (HSEs) for 2006-2007. All HSEs participate in rigorous training and are assigned to schools needing assistance in raising the achievement levels of their students.

The 22 new HSEs are Bonnie Adams,

teacher, Letcher County; Nate Bordeaux, teacher, Boone County; Hannah Campbell, teacher, Fayette County; Lisa Carroll, instructional supervisor, Hazard Independent; Leisa Dickerson, teacher, Lee County; Tina Grimes, teacher/surrogate principal, Warren County; Stephanie Hatfield, instructional coach, Jefferson County; Pabby Hayes, literacy coach/gifted teacher, Shelby County; Lori Hollen, teacher, Clay County; Kristi Jenkins, teacher, Somerset Independent; Dona Malone, teacher, Jefferson County; Sheri McKinney, curriculum specialist, Ohio County; Penny Osborne, teacher, Hardin County; Donna Patterson, curriculum specialist, Green County; Aubrey Pennington, curriculum specialist, Pulaski County; Amy Ramage, teacher, Webster County; Debbie Rogers, teacher, Jefferson County; Mary Rudd, director of middle school/high school curriculum, Boyle County; Tom Stewart, teacher, Warren County; Jill Tabor, teacher, Jefferson County; Suzanne Wright, teacher, Jefferson County; and, Darlene Young, counselor, Madison County.

To become an HSE, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Kentucky certification
- A minimum of five years of experience as an educator (ten years preferred)
- At least three years of current experience as an educator
- Knowledge of current educational practice in Kentucky
- Awareness of Kentucky's "Standards and Indicators for School Improvement"
- Willingness to travel

Since 1990, the HSE program (known as the Distinguished Educator program until 1998) has identified and trained more than 300 educators to work with schools identified by the state assessment and accountability program as being in need of assistance.

The HSEs provide a number of services to low-performing schools. They help faculties and administrators assess the needs of the school/district, including analyzing test data and the Kentucky Scholastic Audit Report. They lead the School Improvement Team in amending the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan and ensure a focused use of Commonwealth School Improvement Funds within the school's budget. They also provide professional development for educators in the schools or districts.

KASA scholarship

The Kentucky Association of School Administrators (KASA) is partnering with Kentucky's public universities to provide scholarships to aspiring school administrators for one, three-credit-hour course taken this summer.

Applicants must be enrolled in a university program leading to certification as a school administrator or they must be experienced school administrators enrolled in a university program leading to a higher degree or other leadership certificate in school administration.

The completed application and three letters of recommendation must be submitted to the university department chair by May 19.

www.kasa.org



Photo by Rick McComb

Sharing a favorite story

Principal Melissa Monts shows students at Anderson County Early Childhood Center how much she enjoys reading for pleasure during a recent visit to Lynn Akin's classroom. Student Alee Rowland followed along in the book as Monts read a favorite story.

Private College Week

High school counselors and academic advisors may want to encourage students to mark their calendars for the third annual Kentucky Private College Week, June 12-16. The weeklong event is a collaborative effort among 20 nonprofit, four-year colleges and universities in Kentucky to encourage high school students to explore the benefits of private postsecondary education.

During Private College Week, each campus will offer daily sessions at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. (local time) that include a campus tour and information sessions on admissions, financial aid, academics and campus life.

Students will receive application fee waivers to the colleges and universities they visit (up to 10 visits possible). This is a potential savings of as much as \$500.

For a list of participating colleges or to

register online, visit www.aikcu.org. For more information, contact Mason Dyer, Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities, at (502) 695-5007, mason@mai.aikcu.org.

National dropout study

A new report issued by the American Youth Policy Forum highlights effective dropout recovery efforts that are being implemented by educators, policymakers and community leaders across the country. Jefferson County Public Schools is highlighted in the report, titled, "Whatever it takes: how twelve communities are reconnecting out-of-school youth."

The report noted Jefferson County's traditional and alternative programs that meet the diverse needs, interests and learning styles of different students.

To access the report, visit www.aypf.org/publications/WhateverItTakes.htm.

Therapeutic recreation makes a difference for students

By Joy Barr

joy.barr@education.ky.gov

Life is often compared to driving down a highway. Many people face experiences along the way that give joy and make life meaningful. Those who encounter a roadblock or a difficult challenge must develop coping mechanisms. Learning to cope sometimes is difficult for a child and interferes with learning.

Special needs students at Southern Middle School (Fayette County) are learning ways to confront the challenges life has thrown their way. Help is available to them through a unique and rewarding partnership between the middle school and Eastern Kentucky University (EKU).

Michelle Gerken, an assistant professor at EKU's Department of Recreation and Park Administration, initially received an EKU fellowship to offer a new program in schools where students would use recreation as a behavior modification tool. Gerken approached the special education teachers at Southern Middle, who were receptive to developing the partnership. The therapeutic recreation program is now in its second year.

Therapeutic recreation is considered a "related service" that districts must provide to students who have it listed on their Individual Education Plan (IEP). A related service is any develop-



Nan Abner, center, works with Southern Middle students Osama Mashi and Jennifer Turley as they play a game of dominos. Abner and Beth Godbey, graduate students at Eastern Kentucky University, are providing a therapeutic recreation program at the school this year.

mental, corrective and other supportive service required to assist a student with a disability. It includes early identification and assessment of disabling conditions in children.

Districts and schools with students identified as benefiting from therapeutic recreation can use the services of a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS). These specialists

organize, conduct and administer therapeutic recreation and leisure programs designed to help students with emotional, physical or cognitive disabilities.

Special education teacher Donna Arnold helped select students for the program based on who could most benefit from services provided through therapeutic recreation.

Students were placed in three separate groups according to grade level and by maturity level. Students in each group had been identified with behaviors ranging from Attention Deficit Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, Mild Mental Disabilities and Learning Disabilities.

All students had specific needs relating to learning issues and/or relationships with others. Some students had even more specific needs related to working on fine motor skills and problem-solving strategies. Others needed help handling change and/or stressful situations they encountered. Therapeutic recreation can help bring relevance, meaning and purpose to a person's life.

This semester, two EKU graduate students, Beth Godbey and Nan Abner, facilitated the weekly class at Southern. Each is completing an independent study in therapeutic recreation under Gerken's direction.

The graduate students offer constructive activities designed to help the special needs students experience success in the classroom. They involved Southern students in team-building activities, helped them work on communication skills and developing trust with their peers and faculty, and monitored their progress.

Beth and Nan developed lesson plans and spent about 90 minutes with the middle school students each week. The majority of the students in the program were eager to work with the EKU students because special needs students often are not picked for special events and the sense that they were chosen for the class made them feel special.

The class became something most students looked forward to each week, and they were disappointed when a session had to be canceled, Arnold said.

Positive changes have occurred at Southern as a result of the therapeutic recreation program. According to Arnold, the special education teacher, participating students have greater success in cooperative learning groups. They have greater tolerance for stressful situations. They use more appropriate replacement behaviors, exhibit greater self-esteem and demonstrate an overall "team-like" approach in class with students they often couldn't work with before.

Initially, many Southern Middle teachers did not like having a student miss any portion of their classes. They now overwhelmingly support the program because they have seen results in the classroom. Southern teachers believe the therapeutic recreation program has definitely made a difference in the lives of the participating students, Arnold said.

For more information, contact Donna Arnold, Southern Middle special education teacher, (859) 381-3582, darnold@fayette.k12.ky.us, or Michelle Gerken, EKU Department of Recreation and Park Administration, (859) 622-2314, michelle.gerken@eku.edu.



Max Bostwick, standing, supports Jessy Helberg as he inches under the "limbo" rope during an activity designed to help the Southern Middle students learn to trust one another and work together.



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